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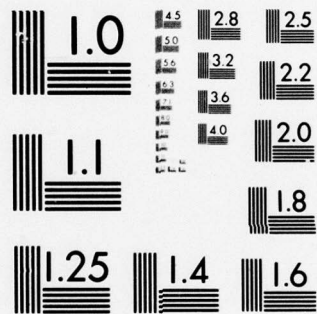
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**ATTITUDES OF MILITARY OFFICERS
TOWARD PROMOTION**

By

William E. Beusse

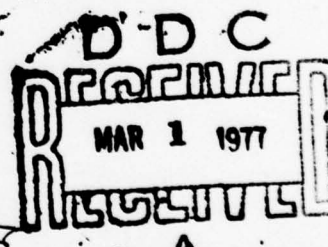
Manpower Development and Evaluation Branch
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PERSONNEL RESEARCH DIVISION
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This interim report was submitted by the Manpower Development and Evaluation Branch, Personnel Research Division, Air Force Human Resources Laboratory, Lackland AFB, Texas 78236, to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs).

This report has been reviewed and cleared for open publication and/or public release by the appropriate Office of Information (OI) in accordance with AFR 190-17 and DoDD 5230.9. There is no objection to unlimited distribution of this report to the public at large, or by DDC to the National Technical Information Service (NTIS).

This technical report has been reviewed and is approved.

LELAND D. BROKAW, Technical Director
Personnel Research Division

Approved for publication.

DAN D. FULGHAM, Colonel, USAF
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→ military promotions were slower than civilian ones. More than three-quarters of the officers felt that below-the-zone promotions had a good effect. Promotions meant more responsibility and more satisfaction to most officers. Ability was cited as the factor which should be most important in promotion. Finally, more than half expected to retire at pay grade O-6 or higher. ↑

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ATTITUDES OF MILITARY OFFICERS TOWARD PROMOTION

INTRODUCTION

Most service personnel have a strong interest in promotion policies and procedures since their service careers are closely tied to them. In the services, as in many other organizations, organizational rank is the primary means through which organizational rewards are distributed. Military protocol and many customs and courtesies are based on rank. An individual's pay is largely determined by his rank. Even the length of his service career depends to some extent on the rank he attains. Rank is highly visible in the military since every member of the armed services wears clearly identifiable insignia which designate his position in the organization's hierarchy. These factors combine to engender a great deal of interest in the promotion process.

The purpose of this report is to analyze the attitudes of military officers toward the promotion system. The data for the study came from the 1973 DoD Personnel Survey (Officer Form C). This omnibus survey was administered in the fall of 1973 to a stratified random sample of officers within the four military services. The information contained in this report consists of sample estimates based upon the responses of over 20,000 officers, weighted to proportionately represent the total officer population on active duty at the time the survey was administered. Because the promotions of certain types of officers (Doctors, Dentists, Lawyers, Chaplains, etc.) are handled by a separate system, they have been excluded from this analysis. Complete details on the survey development, testing, administration, and weighting have been reported elsewhere (Beusse, 1974).

The survey gathered data relevant to officers' attitudes toward the promotion system: satisfaction with its operation, perceptions of its equity, the meaning ascribed to promotion, and experience with and opinions about below-the-zone promotions. Also, information was sought concerning individuals' perceptions of which factors are and which should be most important in determining promotions. In addition, respondents were asked for information concerning their expectations about their next promotion and their terminal rank. The actual questions asked appear in the Appendix.

Officers serving within their initial obligated tour of duty probably have different attitudes toward promotion from officers serving beyond their obligation. Because of the potential for different orientations of the two groups, the data were analyzed separately for officers serving within and those serving beyond their initial obligated tour of service. Also, since an individual's attitudes toward the promotion system are likely to be related to his position in the hierarchy, the data are analyzed by pay grade.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION

Since attitudes are often related to the demographic characteristics, a brief profile of the two groups of officers is presented. Table 1 summarizes the distribution, by pay grade, of officers serving within their initial obligated tour across a number of demographic variables.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Officers
Serving Within Their Initial
Obligated Tour

	<u>Pay Grade</u>		
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>
<u>Sex:</u>			
Male	94.2%	94.6%	98.5%
Female	5.8	5.4	1.5
<u>Marital Status:</u>			
Married	59.1	68.5	80.3
Single	39.5	29.6	16.5
Other	1.4	1.8	3.2
<u>Number of Dependents</u>			
None	43.9	34.1	19.7
One	35.3	32.0	29.8
Two	14.2	22.9	25.0
Three or more	6.6	11.0	25.5
<u>Racial Group:</u>			
Nonwhite	6.2	3.7	2.9
White	93.8	96.3	97.1
<u>Education at Entry</u>			
No Baccalaureate degree	15.2	14.3	18.1
Baccalaureate degree	74.0	72.1	68.7
Baccalaureate degree plus additional study	10.8	13.6	13.1
<u>Education Now:</u>			
No Baccalaureate degree	3.4	2.0	3.7
Baccalaureate degree	76.2	68.5	60.0
Baccalaureate degree plus additional study	20.4	29.5	36.3
<u>Source of Commission:</u>			
Academy	10.5	12.4	19.2
OSS, OTS, SMSO, etc.	32.1	29.2	35.5
ROTC	45.4	41.1	31.6
Other	11.9	17.3	13.7
<u>Type of Commission:</u>			
Regular	26.2	33.2	49.2
Reserve	73.8	66.8	50.8

An examination of these statistics shows that women comprise a higher proportion of the officers in the lower pay grades (01 and 02) than in pay grade 03. The higher an officer's pay grade, the more likely he is to be married and the more dependents he is likely to have. As pay grade increases, the proportion of minority group officers decreases. A higher proportion of officers in pay grades 02 and 03 entered the service with some study beyond the baccalaureate level than officers in pay grade 01. Examination of current educational level reveals that as pay grade increases, the likelihood that an officer will have had some graduate study increases. Academy graduates were found to comprise a larger proportion of the officers in each successively higher pay grade. A partial explanation for this involves the fact that the initial obligated tour of the academy graduate is longer than that of officers commissioned from other sources. Also, the higher an officer's pay grade, the more likely he is to have a regular commission.

Table 2 presents the distribution, by pay grade, of officers serving beyond their initial obligated tour across the same set of demographic variables. The data show that at the 04 level and above, the officer corps is composed almost exclusively of males. The higher an officer's pay grade, the more likely he is to be married and, in general, the more dependents he is likely to have. The exception to the latter part of this statement (i.e., the fewer dependents of 06s relative to 05s), may be due to the fact that dependents leave the household as they reach the age of majority. The higher the pay grade, the lower the proportion of nonwhites. With regards to education, the higher an officer's pay grade, the more likely he was to have entered the service with less than a college degree and the more likely that now he has at least some study beyond the baccalaureate. Academy graduates again comprise a higher proportion of each successively higher pay grade. Finally, the higher the pay grade the more likely an officer is to possess a regular commission.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Officers
Serving Beyond Their Initial
Obligated Tour

		<u>Pay Grade</u>		
	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
<u>Sex:</u>				
Male	98.0%	99.2%	99.1%	99.3%
Female	2.0	.8	.9	.7
<u>Marital Status:</u>				
Married	86.7	93.3	94.9	96.3
Single	10.1	3.2	1.9	.9
Other	3.2	3.4	3.2	2.7

(Continued)

Table 2 (Cont'd)

	<u>Pay Grade</u>			
	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
<u>Number of Dependents:</u>				
None	13.1	3.9	1.9	1.4
One	16.5	5.6	5.8	11.5
Two	23.2	12.1	9.7	17.7
Three or more	47.2	78.4	82.6	69.4
<u>Racial Group:</u>				
Nonwhite	4.6	3.7	3.6	1.6
White	95.4	96.3	96.4	98.4
<u>Education at Entry:</u>				
No Baccalaureate degree	27.5	32.0	41.4	67.4
Baccalaureate degree	64.3	63.7	55.5	30.8
Baccalaureate degree plus additional study	8.2	4.2	3.0	1.8
<u>Education Now:</u>				
No Baccalaureate degree	12.3	12.3	12.0	12.3
Baccalaureate degree	39.4	30.9	29.0	23.6
Baccalaureate degree plus	48.3	56.8	59.0	64.1
<u>Source of Commission:</u>				
Academy	8.3	10.7	14.7	20.9
OCS, OTS, SMSO, etc.	40.1	22.9	13.4	20.1
ROTC	40.2	44.4	43.4	22.4
Other	11.5	22.0	28.5	36.5
<u>Type of Commission:</u>				
Regular	61.2	84.9	89.8	98.2
Reserve	38.8	15.1	10.2	1.8

Respondents were also asked whether they would have entered the service if there had been no draft and whether they intended to make the service a career. The responses of the two groups of officers appear in Table 3. It is interesting to note that the proportion of draft motivated officers did not vary significantly between those serving within and those serving beyond their obligated tour. Nor did the proportion differ by pay grade. Thus the services seem able to retain draft motivated officers as well as true volunteers. Among officers serving within their obligation, from about one-third to one-half (depending upon rank) express positive career intent. The great majority of officers serving beyond their

obligated tour report favorable career intentions. However, even among this group, a sizable proportion of the 03s are either undecided or have negative career intent.

Table 3
Accession Motivation and Career Intent
by Pay Grade and Tour of Duty

	Officers Serving Within Obligation			Officers Serving Beyond Obligation			
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Accession Motivation:							
Draft Motivated	37.1%	37.4%	36.8%	31.5%	30.6%	36.9%	35.2%
Unsure	4.6	3.9	3.9	4.6	6.8	6.6	8.6
True Volunteer	58.3	58.7	59.2	63.9	62.6	56.5	56.2
Career Intent:							
Favorable	32.0	32.6	49.1	81.8	96.5	97.8	96.5
Undecided	26.2	24.5	16.8	8.7	2.0	1.1	2.4
Unfavorable	41.8	42.9	34.1	9.5	1.5	1.1	1.1

ATTITUDES TOWARD PROMOTION

Each person has his own unique set of values and ways of perceiving the world. An individual's attitudes toward promotion are likely to be affected by the meaning he ascribes to that process. In this regard, survey respondents were asked what, aside from more money, their latest promotion meant to them. Table 4 shows the distribution by pay grade and tour of duty.

Table 4
Meaning Ascribed to Latest Promotion

What most recent promotion has meant	Officers Serving Within Obligation			Officers Serving Beyond Obligation			
	<u>01*</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
More Respect	NA	12%	10%	6%	5%	5%	4%
More Authority	NA	2	7	5	4	4	3
More Benefits (other than money)	NA	1	1	1	2	1	2
More Job Responsibility	NA	21	31	46	41	40	46
More Personal Satisfaction	NA	22	20	23	32	35	36
Something Else	NA	8	8	7	8	7	5
Nothing other than more money	NA	34	23	13	8	8	3

*Since, with the exception of officers with prior enlisted service, 01s have never received a promotion they have been excluded from this tabulation.

Among those officers serving within their initial obligation, 02s are more likely than 03s to have perceived "nothing other than more money" to have resulted from their last promotion while 03s were more likely to cite increased authority or job responsibility. Among those officers serving beyond their obligation, as pay grade increases the likelihood of the officer citing "more personal satisfaction" increases and the likelihood of citing "nothing other than more money" decreases. The meaning ascribed to promotion differs significantly between obligated officers and career officers. Career officers are much more likely to perceive increased job responsibility and personal satisfaction arising out of their promotion while obligated officers are more likely to perceive only more money.

SATISFACTION WITH THE PROMOTION SYSTEM

Respondents were also queried concerning their satisfaction with the promotion system in their Service. Table 5 shows the distribution by Service. Navy officers indicate the highest degree of satisfaction while Air Force officers report the lowest.

Table 5

Satisfaction with the Promotion System by Service

	<u>Army</u>	<u>Navy</u>	<u>Marine Corps</u>	<u>Air Force</u>	<u>All Services</u>
Satisfied	41%	49%	46%	38%	42%
Neutral	13	11	10	12	12
Dissatisfied	46	40	44	50	46

Table 6 looks at the question of overall satisfaction by pay grade and tour of duty. For officers serving both within and beyond their initial obligation, as pay grade increases the degree of satisfaction with the promotion system increases.

Table 6

Satisfaction with the Promotion System by Pay Grade and Tour of Duty

	<u>Officers Serving Within Obligation</u>			<u>Officers Serving Beyond Obligation</u>			
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Satisfied	27%	32%	39%	38%	47%	56%	75%
Neutral	15	16	14	12	7	8	5
Dissatisfied	59	52	47	50	45	37	20

An attempt was made to gauge the attitudes of the officers toward a number of specific aspects of the promotion system such as: satisfaction with the amount of information about the promotion system, perceptions of civilian comparability, and opinions about the requirements for promotion. Table 7 shows the distribution by Service across these items.

Table 7

Attitudes Toward Promotion
by Service

	<u>Army</u>	<u>Navy</u>	<u>Marine Corps</u>	<u>Air Force</u>	<u>All Services</u>
Satisfaction with amount of promotion information					
Satisfied	54%	65%	62%	58%	58%
Neutral	17	16	15	16	16
Dissatisfied	29	19	23	27	27
Perceptions of civilian-military promotion comparability*					
Military is faster	25	28	21	20	24
Both the same	30	32	26	32	31
Military is slower	45	40	53	48	45
Opinions of TIS/TIG requirements**					
Short or just right	30	37	31	40	35
A little long	40	41	37	41	40
Much too long	30	22	32	20	25
Opinions of other requirements**					
Easy	18	23	21	20	20
Just right	65	67	69	62	65
Hard	17	10	10	18	15

*Excludes those who had "no opinion"

**Excludes those who had "no opinion" or did not know what the requirements were.

Only a little more than one-quarter of the officers indicated they were dissatisfied with the amount of promotion information. Navy officers were found to express the most satisfaction with the promotion information, while Army officers were the least satisfied.

In comparing the rate of promotion in the military to that in civilian life, 24 percent stated they felt that military promotions came faster, 31 percent about the same time, and 45 percent felt the military was slower to promote. Again, Navy officers were found to be the most satisfied. Marine Corps officers had the most negative opinion of military-civilian promotion comparability.

Overall, a little more than one-third of the officers indicated they felt that the time-in-service/time-in-grade (TIS/TIG) requirements for promotion were either short or just right. Forty percent indicated they felt these requirements were a little long and 25 percent stated they were much too long. Officers in the Air Force and Navy expressed the most satisfaction with the timing requirements while Marine Corps and Army Officers expressed the least.

The vast majority of the officers in all the services expressed no problems concerning "other requirements" for promotions such as performance ratings, command experience, education, training, etc. Only 15 percent indicated that these requirements were hard to satisfy. Navy and Marine Corps officers expressed the most favorable opinions of these requirements while officers in the Air Force and Army showed the least amount of satisfaction.

Table 8 displays the distribution of attitudes toward promotion by pay grade and tour of duty.

Table 8

Attitudes Toward Promotion
by Pay Grade and Tour of Duty

	Officers Serving Within Obligation			03	Officers Serving Beyond Obligation		
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>		<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Satisfaction with amount of promotion information							
Satisfied	53%	53%	55%	58%	61%	67%	78%
Neutral	22	19	20	14	12	11	10
Dissatisfied	25	28	25	28	27	22	12
Perceptions of civilian- military promotion comparability*							
Military is faster	26	27	25	22	20	18	16
Both the same	27	31	33	29	32	37	44
Military is slower	47	42	42	49	48	45	40

Table 8 (Cont'd)

	Officers Serving Within Obligation			Officers Serving Beyond Obligation			
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Opinions of TIS/TIG requirements**							
Short or just right	18	34	30	26	39	63	92
A little long	52	46	43	46	40	27	7
Much too long	30	20	27	28	21	10	1
Opinions of other requirements**							
Easy	32	36	26	17	13	9	8
Just right	62	57	61	67	66	64	76
Hard	6	7	13	16	21	27	16

*Excludes those who had "no opinion".

**Excludes those who had "no opinion" or did not know what the requirements were.

Those officers serving beyond their initial obligation were more likely than obligated officers to express satisfaction with the amount of promotion information. Among the junior officers serving within their initial tour, pay grade appears to have little effect upon the degree of satisfaction with information. However, among the senior officers, the higher the individual's pay grade the more likely he is to be satisfied with the amount of promotion information.

In general, obligated officers are more likely than other officers to perceive the military as offering faster promotions. Officers serving within their initial tours differed only slightly by pay grade with respect to their perceptions of military-civilian promotion comparability. OIs are somewhat more likely to report the opinion that promotions are slower in the military. Among those officers serving beyond their obligation, it was found that the higher an officer's pay grade, the more likely he is to perceive military promotions as comparable to civilian promotions in rate.

As a group, obligated officers expressed less satisfaction than other officers with TIS/TIG requirements. Those serving in pay grade 01 indicated the most dissatisfaction with the timing requirements while 02s exhibited the most satisfaction. For unobligated officers, the higher an individual's pay grade the more likely he was to express satisfaction with the TIS/TIG requirements for promotion to the next higher pay grade.

Obligated officers were much more satisfied than unobligated ones with the other requirements for promotion. This is probably due largely to the fact that there are virtually no requirements to satisfy other than time in order to advance to pay grade 03 since promotions below 04 are highly structured with little or no room for other factors to operate. Among career officers, the higher an individual's pay grade the less likely he was to report the other promotion requirements as being easy to satisfy. Officers in pay grades 04 and 05 were also more likely to indicate that the other requirements were difficult to satisfy.

Officers were also asked how many years time-in-grade they felt an officer should spend in his current pay grade before he is promoted. Table 9 shows the distribution of responses by pay grade and tour of duty.

Table 9

Preferred Time-in-Grade Prerequisite
for Promotion by Pay Grade and Tour
of Duty

<u>Preferred TIG</u>	<u>Officers Serving Within Obligation</u>			<u>Officers Serving Beyond Obligation</u>			
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Less than 2 years	90%	40%	3%	1%	0%	1%	1%
2-3 years	9	47	5	2	2	6	9
3-4 years	1	12	20	13	15	23	28
4-5 years	0	1	37	35	38	33	36
5-6 years	0	0	25	34	34	30	20
6 or more years	0	0	10	15	11	7	6

Table 9 reveals a number of interesting findings. The great majority of 01s believe promotion to 02 should come within two years which coincides with current policy. Among the 02s, 60 percent indicate they believe promotion to 03 should come after at least two years in grade as an 02. Thus the TIG requisite preferred by 02s is somewhat longer than that required by policy for promotion to 03. Almost two-thirds of the 03s serving within their initial obligation believe that promotion to 04 should come within 5 years after they were promoted to 03. Only 10 percent of these officers believe the current 04 promotion phasing to be appropriate. Among 03s serving beyond their initial obligation, a little over half believed their next promotion should occur within 5 years after promotion to 03. In addition, only 15 percent of these officers imply

agreement with the current TIG requirement. The bulk of the officers in pay grades 04 through 06 feel that the ideal amount of time in grade is less than 5 years. As pay grade increases, the officers are more likely to express this view.

In addition, the respondents were asked at which organizational level they would prefer promotion actions to be made. Table 10 presents the distribution of responses by pay grade. A greater proportion of the obligated officers than unobligated ones would prefer to see the promotion action level delegated downward. For officers serving both within and beyond their initial obligations, the higher an individual's pay grade the more likely he is to prefer promotions to be service-wide and the less likely he is to prefer the immediate unit or major command as the action locus.

Table 10

Preferred Promotion Action
Level by Pay Grade and
Tour of Duty

<u>Preferred Promotion Action Level</u>	<u>Officers Serving Within Obligation</u>			<u>Officers Serving Beyond Obligation</u>			
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Service-Wide	50%	54%	58%	69%	80%	84%	93%
Major Command	33	31	30	25	16	14	6
Immediate Unit	17	15	12	6	4	2	1

BELOW-THE-ZONE PROMOTIONS

Each of the Services operates an accelerated promotion program to reward outstanding performance and satisfy service requirements for exceptional officers. Quotas are established for the total number of promotions available and a certain proportion is allocated for promoting officers who are below the zone of primary consideration. The primary intent is to provide some flexibility in the highly structured promotion timetable to provide an incentive for high performance. Respondents were asked whether they had ever received a below-the-zone (BTZ) promotion. About six percent of the officers in the Army, Navy, and Air Force and three percent of the Marine officers have received BTZ promotions.

As Table 11 shows, very few junior officers have received BTZ promotions. Among career officers, the higher an individual's pay grade the more likely he was to have received at least one BTZ promotion at some time during his career.

Table 11

Experience with Below-the-Zone
Promotions by Pay Grade and
Tour of Duty

<u>Receipt of BTZ PROMOTION</u>	<u>Officers Serving Within Obligation</u>			<u>Officers Serving Beyond Obligation</u>			
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Yes	NA	2%	3%	2%	6%	13%	32%
No	NA	98	97	98	94	87	68

The officers were also asked what effect they thought BTZ promotions had. Table 12 shows the distribution of responses by service.

Table 12

Perceived Effect of BTZ
Promotions by Service

<u>Perceived effect of BTZ Promotions</u>	<u>Army</u>	<u>Navy</u>	<u>Marine Corps</u>	<u>Air Force</u>	<u>All Services</u>
No effect	6%	5%	9%	3%	5%
Good effect because:					
Career Motivation	7	8	7	11	8
Performance Motivation	39	40	42	41	40
Satisfaction	14	17	12	15	15
Other	16	12	15	14	14
Bad effect because:					
Spend more time in next grade	2	1	1	1	1
More BTZ promotions will be expected	4	3	2	4	4
Lack of experience	9	10	5	7	8
Other	5	5	6	5	5

Over three quarters of the officers see the BTZ promotion program as having a beneficial impact. Among those perceiving a positive effect, over half indicated this effect would be in the form of increased performance motivation. Among the 17 percent who perceive bad effects of rapid promotions, almost half cite the BTZ officer's lack of essential experience as the main reason for their assessment.

Table 13 shows the distribution of perceptions about the effects of BTZ promotions by pay grade and tour of duty. The response categories have been collapsed into the three main groups: good effect, no effect, and bad effect.

Table 13

Perceived Effect of BTZ
Promotions by Pay Grade
and Tour of Duty

<u>Perceived Effect of BTZ Promotions</u>	<u>Officers Serving Within Obligation</u>			<u>Officers Serving Beyond Obligation</u>			
	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Good	85%	87%	87%	82%	69%	65%	68%
None	5	4	3	4	5	4	5
Bad	10	9	10	14	26	31	27

As can be seen, obligated officers were more likely than career officers to perceive beneficial effects from BTZ promotions. This is especially interesting since the senior officers have had much more experience with early promotions.

PROMOTION EXPECTATIONS

The questionnaire contained several items dealing with officer's expectations concerning future promotions. As was noted earlier, a significant proportion of the officers still serving within their original commitment reported they did not intend to remain in the service. Thus, their responses regarding future promotions would be misleading. Consequently, this section analyzes only the responses from those officers who have completed their obligated tour. Table 14 shows the proportion of officers in each pay grade who don't expect any more promotions.

Table 14

Proportion of Officers
Indicating They are
at Their Terminal Grade

<u>Pay Grade</u>	<u>Percent Expecting No More Promotions</u>
03	5%
04	14
05	34
06	76

The higher the officer's pay grade, the less likely he is to expect any more promotions. Many of the 03s and 04s who don't expect any additional promotions may have had prior enlisted service. Based upon historical and projected rates, the expectations of the 05s and 06s are somewhat over optimistic.

Respondents were also asked about the likelihood that they would be promoted to the next higher pay grade on time or earlier than is normal. The distribution of responses by Service and pay grade appears in Table 15.

Table 15

Perceived Chance for On-Time
Promotion by Service, Pay Grade

<u>Service</u>	<u>Chance of on-time or earlier promotion</u>			
	<u>Excellent- Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor- Very Poor</u>	<u>No Idea</u>
Army	56%	12%	20%	12%
Navy	61	11	21	7
Marine Corps	49	12	28	11
Air Force	60	14	20	6
All Services	58	12	21	9
<u>Pay Grade</u>				
03	68	15	12	5
04	59	15	21	4
05	37	19	39	5
06	7	12	68	13

Navy and Air Force officers expressed the highest degree of optimism about their next promotion while officers in the Marine Corps were the most pessimistic. As pay grade increased, officers were found to be increasingly more pessimistic. The percentage who felt they had a good to excellent chance for promotion appears to represent a realistic appraisal since it approximates actual promotion selection rates.

Two questions were asked in order to assess the advancement aspirations of the officers. First, they were asked how high a pay grade they expected to achieve by the time they retired. Second, they were asked what they considered the minimum pay grade necessary to give a feeling of a successful career. Those officers who indicated that they would not remain in the service until retirement were excluded from the following analyses. Table 16 presents the anticipated and minimum successful career grades by service.

Table 16

Anticipated and Minimum Successful
Career Aspirations by Service

Anticipated retirement grade:	<u>Army</u>	<u>Navy</u>	<u>Marine Corps</u>	<u>Air Force</u>	<u>All Services</u>
07 to 010	12%	8%	12%	11%	11%
06	44	40	31	44	43
05	37	36	38	36	36
04	7	16	19	9	10
Minimum successful career grade:					
07 to 010	8	5	8	7	7
06	43	35	31	42	40
05	41	46	44	42	42
04	8	14	17	9	11

The data in Table 16 indicate that the career aspirations of military officers are fairly high. Over half of the career officer corps expects to achieve at least pay grade 06. Officers in the Army and Air Force have the most optimistic expectations while Marine Corps officers are the least optimistic. When the officers were asked to indicate what pay grade they considered necessary in order to feel they had had a successful career, there was a noticeable downward shift. Still, almost half of the officers report that achievement of pay grade 06 is the career success standard. Army and Air Force officers had especially high career standards.

An officer's current pay grade has a fairly strong impact upon his career aspirations (Table 17). The higher an officer's present pay grade, the higher the pay grade he expects to attain and the higher the pay grade he indicates as the minimum criterion for success. Over half the officers serving in pay grades 03 and 04 report that achievement of 05 would signify a successful career. Only about one-third of the 05s indicated that they had already achieved the minimum, while two-thirds designated pay grade 06 or above as the criterion of success. Four-fifths of the 06s indicated that they already considered their careers to be successful while 20 percent report they would have to attain flag rank in order to feel truly successful.

Table 17

Career Rank Aspirations
by Current Pay Grade

	Pay Grade			
	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Minimum pay grade necessary for feeling of a successful career:				
07 to 010	4%	4%	6%	20%
06	31	36	60	72
05	53	52	33	8
04	12	8	1	0
Expected retirement pay grade:				
07 to 010	9	6	8	19
06	37	34	49	81
05	43	44	43	-
04	11	16	-	-

Table 18 presents information on the flag rank career aspirations by pay grade and years of active duty. Within pay grades, officers with the fewest years of service generally were more likely to indicate that flag rank is necessary for a successful career and were also more likely to expect to attain flag rank before retirement. Officers in pay grades 03 and 04 deviated slightly from this pattern.

Table 18

Flag Rank Aspirations by
Pay Grade and Years of Service

<u>Years of Active Duty</u>	<u>Percent Indicating Flag Rank is Minimum for a Successful Career</u>				<u>Percent Expecting to Achieve Flag Rank by Retirement</u>			
	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
3-6	5%				11%			
6-8	5				9			
8-10	5	3%			12	13%		
10-12	3	5			6	10		
12-14	1	4			4	9		
14-16		4	10%			4	14%	
16-20		1	7	33%		2	9	31%
20-25			4	25			6	26
25 or more			3	16			1	12

PERCEPTIONS OF FACTORS RELATED TO PROMOTION

A number of questions were devoted to determining what factors officers perceived as having an important influence on promotion decisions and what factors they would prefer to be important. For both the "is" and "should be" items, respondents were asked to designate, in order of importance, the three most influential factors. They were given a list of nine alternatives to choose from: responsibilities of the job, abilities of the officer, performance ratings, time-in-service, time-in-grade, experience on the job, civilian education level, military training and/or schools attended, and the officer's interpersonal relations. A score of from 3 to 0 was assigned depending upon whether the individual ascribed its importance as first, second, third, or unchosen. The mean values and the rank order of these scores is shown in Table 19 for all officers.

Table 19
Mean Promotion Factor Scores
and Ranks

Promotion Factors	Mean Score and Rank Perceived Influence Of Factor On Promotion	Mean Score and Rank Influence Of Factor On Promotion Should Be
Responsibilities	.51 (5)	1.08 (3)
Abilities	.90 (2)	2.57 (1)
Performance Ratings	2.18 (1)	1.09 (2)
Time-in-Service	.35 (6)	.09 (9)
Time-in-Grade	.76 (3)	.21 (5)
Experience	.15 (9)	.56 (4)
Education	.22 (8)	.12 (6.5)
Training	.32 (7)	.12 (6.5)
Interpersonal Relations	.58 (4)	.11 (8)

The higher the score in Table 19, the more important the factor is judged to be or preferred to be. As can be seen, Performance Ratings are seen to be the most important factor in the way promotion decisions are currently made. However, when officers indicate what they feel should be most important, they choose Ability. A Spearman rank order coefficient (ρ) was computed for the "is" and "should be" questions and was found to be not significant ($r_s = .48$).

To obtain a measure of an individual's satisfaction with the influence of a given factor in promotion decisions, the "should be" score for the factor was subtracted from its "is" score. A negative value would indicate that the factor is believed to be underemphasized, a zero value would indicate correct emphasis, and a positive value would indicate overemphasis. Table 20 summarizes the distribution of perceived emphasis for all officers.

Table 20
Distribution of Perceived Emphasis
of Promotion Factors

<u>Promotion factors</u>	<u>Underemphasized</u>	<u>Emphasis</u>	
		<u>Correct</u>	<u>Overemphasized</u>
Responsibility	41%	50%	9%
Ability	75	22	3
Performance Ratings	8	31	61
Time-in-Service	4	80	16
Time-in-Grade	5	63	32
Experience	30	67	3
Educational Level	5	83	12
Military Training	5	77	18
Interpersonal Relations	4	69	27

As the data in Table 20 indicates, the ability of the officer, the responsibility of the job, and the officer's experience are generally seen as underemphasized while such factors as performance ratings, time-in-grade, and interpersonal relationships are perceived as overemphasized. The difference between perceived emphasis of ability and performance ratings implies that officers do not see performance ratings as adequately assessing ability.

REFERENCE

Beusse, W. E. Documentation of the 1973 DoD Personnel Survey. OASD (M&RA)
MR 74-11, AFHRL-TR-74-80. AD 785 385. Alexandria, Va.: Manpower
Development Branch, Air Force Human Resources Laboratory, May 1974.

APPENDIX A: Relevant Survey Items

1. In what Service are you now serving?
 - A. Navy
 - B. Army
 - C. Marine Corps
 - D. Air Force
2. What is your present pay grade?
 - A. Warrant Officer
 - B. 01
 - C. 02
 - D. 03
 - E. 04
 - F. 05
 - G. 06
3. What is your sex?
 - A. Male
 - B. Female
4. What is your marital status?
 - A. Married
 - B. Single, never married
 - C. Divorced or legally separated
 - D. Widowed
5. How many dependents do you have? (Use the number claimed for income tax purposes. Do not include yourself.)
 - A. None
 - B. One
 - C. Two
 - D. Three
 - E. Four
 - F. Five
 - G. Six or more
6. Which of the following do you consider yourself?
 - A. Black/Negro
 - B. Spanish or Mexican American
 - C. American Indian
 - D. Asian American
 - E. White/Caucasian
7. Are you presently serving within your initial Service obligation as a Commissioned Officer?
 - A. Not applicable, I am a Warrant Officer, Commissioned Warrant Officer, or Limited Duty Officer
 - B. Yes
 - C. No, I am serving within the first year after my initial obligation
 - D. No, I am serving more than one year beyond my initial obligation

8. How long have you been on active duty? (If you have had a break in Service, count current time and time in previous tours).
- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Less than 1 year | E. 4 but less than 6 |
| B. 1 but less than 2 | F. 6 but less than 8 |
| C. 2 but less than 3 | G. 8 but less than 10 |
| D. 3 but less than 4 | H. 10 or more years |
9. What was your highest level of education when you first entered active duty? (Include GED credits, if any)
- A. No high school
 - B. Some high school
 - C. GED certificate or diploma
 - D. High school graduate
 - E. One or two years of college or vocational school (include Associate degree)
 - F. More than two years of college
 - G. College degree (BA, BS or equivalent)
 - H. Graduate study but no graduate degree
 - I. Masters degree
 - J. Doctoral degree
10. What is your highest level of education now? (Include GED credits, if any)
- A. No high school
 - B. Some high school
 - C. GED certificate or diploma
 - D. High school graduate
 - E. One or two years of college or vocational school (include Associate degree)
 - F. More than two years of college
 - G. College degree (BA, BS or equivalent)
 - H. Graduate study but no graduate degree
 - I. Masters degree
 - J. Doctoral degree
11. Through which of the following officer procurement programs did you obtain your commission/warrant?
- A. Academy Graduate (USMA, USNA, or USAFA)
 - B. Limited Duty Officer Program
 - C. Officer Candidate School or Officer Training School
 - D. ROTC (Regular)
 - E. ROTC (Scholarship)
 - F. Aviation Officer Candidate or Aviation Cadets
 - G. Warrant Officer Program
 - H. Direct Appointment from Civilian Status
 - I. Reserve Officer Candidate
 - J. Platoon Leaders Course (USMC)
 - K. Other

12. What is your current military status?
- A. Regular
 - B. Reserve
13. If there had been no draft and you had no military obligation at the time you first entered active Service, do you think you would have voluntarily entered the Service?
- A. Definitely yes
 - B. Probably yes
 - C. Probably not
 - D. Definitely not
 - E. I have no idea what I would have done
 - F. Not applicable, I was not subject to the draft
14. What are your career plans?
- A. Definitely plan to make Service a career
 - B. Probably will make Service a career
 - C. Don't know
 - D. Probably won't make Service a career
 - E. Definitely won't make Service a career
15. Are you satisfied with the amount of information you have received about the promotion system of your service?
- A. Very satisfied
 - B. Somewhat satisfied
 - C. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - D. Somewhat dissatisfied
 - E. Very dissatisfied
16. Are you satisfied with the promotion system in your Service?
- A. Very satisfied
 - B. Somewhat satisfied
 - C. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - D. Somewhat dissatisfied
 - E. Very dissatisfied
17. How do you think promotions in the military compare with promotions in civilian firms?
- A. Promotions are much faster in the military
 - B. Promotions are somewhat faster in the military
 - C. Promotions come at about the same rate
 - D. Promotions are somewhat slower in the military
 - E. Promotions are much slower in the military
 - F. No opinion or don't know

18. Aside from money, what has your latest promotion meant to you?
- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| A. Not applicable, I have never been promoted | E. More job responsibility |
| B. More respect | F. More personal satisfaction |
| C. More authority | G. Something not on this list |
| D. More benefits (other than more money) | H. Nothing other than more money |
19. At what level do you think promotion actions should be taken to fill vacancies in the next highest pay grade from the one you presently hold?
- A. Service-wide
B. Major command
C. Immediate Unit
20. Of the following items, which do you think has the most important influence on promotion decisions?
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| A. Responsibilities of the job | F. Experience on the job |
| B. Abilities of the officer | G. Civilian education level |
| C. The officer's performance ratings | H. Military training and/or schools attended |
| D. Time-in-Service | I. The officer's interpersonal relationships |
| E. Time-in-grade | |
21. Which has the second most important influence?
22. Which has the third most important influence?
23. If the promotion system could be changed to the way you would like to see it, which of the following items do you think should have the most important influence on promotion?
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| A. Responsibilities of the job | F. Experience on the job |
| B. Abilities of the officer | G. Civilian education level |
| C. The officers performance ratings | H. Military training and/or schools attended |
| D. Time-in-Service | I. The officer's interpersonal relationships |
| E. Time-in-grade | |
24. Which should have the second most important influence?
25. Which should have the third most important influence?

26. When do you expect your next promotion?

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. Less than 1 year | E. 4 but less than 5 |
| B. 1 but less than 2 | F. 5 or more years |
| C. 2 but less than 3 | G. I don't expect any more promotions |
| D. 3 but less than 4 | |

27. What do you think of the time-in-Service/time-in-grade requirements for promotion to the next highest grade from the one you presently hold?

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| A. Much too short | E. Much too long |
| B. A little bit too short | F. I don't know what these requirements are |
| C. Just about right | G. No opinion |
| D. A little bit too long | |

28. What do you think of the other requirements (performance ratings, command experience, educational/training requirements, etc.) for promotion to the next highest grade from the one you presently hold?

- A. The requirements are much too easy to satisfy
- B. The requirements are a little too easy to satisfy
- C. The requirements are just about right
- D. The requirements are a little too hard to satisfy
- E. The requirements are much too hard to satisfy
- F. I don't know what these requirements are
- G. No opinion

29. How many years time-in-grade do you think an officer should spend in the pay grade you now hold before he is promoted?

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| A. Less than 1 year | F. 5 but less than 6 |
| B. 1 but less than 2 | G. 6 but less than 7 |
| C. 2 but less than 3 | H. 7 but less than 8 |
| D. 3 but less than 4 | I. 8 or more years |
| E. 4 but less than 5 | |

30. Have you ever received a "below-the-zone" promotion?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| A. No | E. Yes, to 03 |
| B. Yes, more than once | F. Yes, to 04 |
| C. Yes, to W02, W03, or W04 | G. Yes, to 05 |
| D. Yes, to 02 | H. Yes, to 06 |

31. What do you think is the most probable effect of officers receiving a "below-the-zone" promotion?

A. It has no effect

IT HAS A GOOD EFFECT BECAUSE:

B. They are more likely to make the Service a career

C. They will be motivated to perform better

D. They will be much more satisfied

E. Other

IT HAS A BAD EFFECT BECAUSE:

F. They will spend a longer time in that grade because the normal time requirements might not be waived for the next highest grade

G. They will expect more fast promotions in the future

H. They will not have had enough experience

I. Other

32. What do you think your chances are of being promoted to the next higher pay grade on time or earlier than is normal?

A. Excellent

D. Poor

B. Good

E. Very poor

C. Fair

F. I have no idea

33. If you are planning to stay in the Service until you retire, how high a grade do you think you will actually have just before you retire?

A. Not applicable, I do not plan to remain on active duty until eligible for retirement

E. 04

F. 03

G. 02

H. 01

B. 07 to 010

I. Warrant Officer

C. 06

D. 05

34. If you are planning to stay in the Service until you retire, what is the lowest grade level you would have to attain in order to give you the feeling of a "successful career?"

A. Not applicable, I do not plan to remain on active duty until eligible for retirement

E. 04

F. 03

G. 02

H. 01

B. 07 to 010

I. Warrant Officer

C. 06

D. 05